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# BRITISH POLITICS

ANNCR:

BRITAIN'S LABOR GOVERNMENT WON ITS VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ON THURSDAY. BUT THE SPLIT WITHIN THE RULING PARTY WAS EMPHASIZED. THE ECONOMIC POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT WAS CALLED INTO QUESTION. VOA CORRESPONDENT RON GRUNBERG HAS THIS BACKGROUND REPORT.

VOICE:

THIS LABOR GOVERNMENT CAME INTO OFFICE PLEDGED TO CARRY OUT MANY SOCIALIST IDEAS. BUT THE RATE OF PRICE INCREASES AND THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE OUT OF WORK WAS SO HIGH THAT THE GOVERNMENT SAW FIT TO CHANGE ITS WAYS. THERE HAS BEEN A LIMIT FOR SEVERAL MONTHS ON THE AMOUNT OF WAGE INCREASE A WORKER CAN GET. AND ON WEDNESDAY THE GOVERNMENT TRIED TO GET THROUGH THE HOUSE OF COMMONS LEGISLATION TO CUT GOVERNMENT SPENDING BY SIX THOUSAND MILLION DOLLARS.

THE PRIME MINISTER WANTS MORE MONEY ALLOTTED TO PRIVATE INDUSTRY WITH THE AIM OF MAKING BRITAIN MORE COMPETITIVE IN THE WORLD'S TRADING. THE LEFT-WING IN THE LABOR PARTY -- THIRTY-SEVEN M-P'S CALLING THEMSELVES THE TRIBUNE GROUP -- SEES THESE POLICIES AS CONSERVATIVE AND ABSTAINED FROM THE VOTING ON WEDNESDAY IN PROTEST. SO THE BILL WAS DEFEATED.

THE CONSERVATIVE OPPOSITION MADE CLEAR THEIR BELIEF THAT THIS WAS A RESIGNING MATTER; WHEN THE GOVERNMENT'S CENTRAL ECONOMIC STRATEGY WAS REJECTED BY A MAJORITY IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, IT WAS TIME FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO

RESIGN AND FOR NEW ELECTIONS. IT WAS AGREED TO HAVE A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE LATE THURSDAY.

THE PRIME MINISTER MET WITH HIS CABINET TO DISCUSS HOW TO CONDUCT THE DEBATE IN THE COMMONS THAT WOULD COME BEFORE THE VOTE. AS ONE REPORTER WROTE, "MR. WILSON COULD HAVE APPEALED FOR UNITY, HE COULD HAVE OFFERED TINY CONCESSIONS TO THE TRIBUNE GROUP, HE COULD HAVE ISSUED A RALLYING CRY." BUT MR. WILSON IN THE END ATTACKED HIS LEFT-WING SO STRONGLY THAT ONE WONDERED HOW HE COULD HAVE MORE EFFECTIVELY DARED THE TRIBUNE GROUP TO VOTE WITH THE OPPOSITION AND DEFEAT THE GOVERNMENT.

BUT THERE WAS REASON FOR THE ACID ATTACK LATER THAT DAY. THE PRIME MINISTER, APPARENTLY MINDFUL OF THE FALLING POUND STERLING AND THAT THE EYES OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD WOULD BE WATCHING HIS CONDUCT, DECIDED THAT TO MAKE CONCESSIONS TO HIS LEFT-WING WOULD GIVE THE PICTURE OF A PRIME MINISTER WHO HAD TO BEG TO MAINTAIN HIS POWER. HE TOOK THE GAMBLE THAT UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD LEFT-WING LABORITES EVER SIDE WITH A CONSERVATIVE PARTY AGAINST ITS OWN PARTY IN A CONFIDENCE VOTE. AS MR. WILSON HAD FIGURED, WHEN IT CAME TIME TO VOTE, THE TRIBUNE GROUP, ALL OF THEM, MEEKLY FILED INTO THE DIVISION CHAMBERS -- ON THE SIDE OF LABOR -- AND THE GOVERNMENT WON ITS VOTE OF CONFIDENCE.

JS/PY